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Milk is not much utilized by the Santals, being mostly used for preparing curd and for churning butter. The churning is done by both men and women in the following way :- The earthen pot, in which curd is kept, is placed at the foot of a wooden post. They have a churning stick generally made of bamboo, which is three to four feet long and at the base of which are attached intersecting blades. This end of the stick is put inside the earthen pot. The upper end of the churning stick is kept in position by a cord running round the post and the stick. Another long cord is wrapped three or four times round the churning stick and by alternately pulling this cord from each end, the churning stick is made to swirl. After a while unsalted butter comes to the surface from which they prepare "Ghee". The butter milk (the liquid remaining after extracting the unsalted butter) is drunk by the Santals. They consider it to be very nourishing. 234 [272]

**Oil Press :-** The Santals use oil and spices in preparing curry. The oils which they generally use are—Mustard oil and oil from the fruits of the Mahua tree and from other various fruits and seeds. These oils they extract from the seeds and fruits by an oil-press. The oil press is made of two heavy logs of wood fixed on two vertically placed solid posts, at the two ends of the logs. The two logs where they face each other are planed. In the middle on the upper side of the lower log a shallow circular groove is cut and a small channel is made for the oil to come out through a lip, where some utensil is kept to collect the oil. To press the oil out, a rope is coiled round the logs at one end. In order to keep this down a wooden cleat is iserted 258

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844 cut by the midwife with an arrow by placing a coin beneath it, which is afterwards taken by the midwife. The placenta is then buried in a pit in one corner of the courtyard of the house. Immediately a birth is announced there is a gathering of friends and relations for congratulating the parents. After the birth of a child, the house and the village is considered polluted. So the Santals perform the *Janam Chatiar* ceremony, until this is done it is considered unpropituous to engage in any shikar or hunting expedition or religious ceremonies. The usual day for this ceremony is on the fifth day in the case of a male child and on the third day in the case of a female child. All the male members of the village come to the house of birth, first the village officials are shaved then all the other men present and then the father of the child. Then the midwife brings the child near the barber to cut a few locks of hair from the different parts of the head of the child, which are put in a leaf cup. The midwife then ties two threads to the arrow with which the umbilical cord was cut. All the village officials and other male members go to have their bath in a nearby streamlet. Then the midwife carries the child and together with the mother and the women of the village goes to the bathing place. There, the midwife throws the locks of hair and one of the threads in the water. After bathing they come back to the house. The midwife brings with her the second thread and the arrow, this thread is then smeared with turmeric and tied round the waist of the child.

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When the purification has been completed, the men women and children of the village who have assembled at the house receive each a leaf cup full of rice water

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with which the leaves of Nim tree (Melia azadirachta, L) have been mixed. After this they all take a draught of their home-brewed liquor and depart.

On the fifth day the child is given its name. Should it happen to be a son and heir he takes the name of his grandfather; should he be the second son born, he takes the name of his maternal grandfather: and thus the paternal grandfather's brother for the third boy, the maternal grandfather's brother for the fourth boy and so on. The same procedure is followed for girls, the feminine relations being in the same order from the female side.

**Chacho Chhatiar**: It is a very important ceremony of the Santals, which enables the individual to take his place in Santal society and participate in its rights, rules and ceremonies. Without this no Santal can be married or cremated; if anybody dies without this ceremony he is buried. There is no age limit for this ceremony though it must precede marriage. Generally the Santal performs this ceremony for several children at the same time.

Mr. O'Malley has given a full description of this ceremony in the District Gazetteer[1] in the following words. "The father brews handi and provides oil and turmeric for the villagers. When the handi is ready he calls the manjhi and paranik in the morning and gives them a drink. They ask him what handi it is, and, after drinking, the headman bids the godet call the villagers together. When they have come the girls of the village anoint the naeke and his wife, who sit

[1] L.S.S.O'Malley—Bengal District Gazetters (Santal Parganas) pp. 132-133.